GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:255
ANSWERED ON:21.03.2005
PROTECTION OF MANGROVE FORESTS
Oram Shri Jual;Singh Shri Lakshman

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the increase in the destruction of mangrove forests in various coastal States;

(b) if so, the steps taken for the proper conservation of the existing mangrove forest areas;

(c) whether there is any proposal to develop mangrove forests in the coastal States particularly which have been affected by Tsunami; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA)

(a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to parts (a) (b) (c) and (d) of the Lok Sabha Starred Question No.255 due for reply on 21.3.2005 regarding Protection of Mangrove Forests.

(a) As per State of Forest Report, 2001 the area under mangroves is 4482 square Kms. This is less than the reported area of 4871 square Kms for the year 1999. The main reasons for this decline in reported mangrove area are change in the methodology (digital interpretation) and scale of interpretation (1: 50,000) due to which small water bodies (creeks, straits etc.) and non-mangrove areas (which earlier could not be delineated) could be detected and have been excluded from mangrove cover. These fragile ecosystems are under tremendous biotic pressure.

(b) In order to protect and conserve the mangrove areas the Government has taken the following steps: -

Regulatory Measures:

(i) The mangroves have been declared as category
(i) areas under the Coastal Regulation Zone notification, 1991. These areas are accorded protection of highest order and no developmental activities are permitted except those permissible under the notification.

(ii) Mangroves located within the notified forest areas are also covered under the Indian Forest Act, 1927 and Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

Promotional Measures:

Under the Mangrove Management Action Plan, 35 mangrove areas in the country have been identified for intensive conservation and management. Rs 8.27 crores have been released by the Union Government to concerned Coastal States and UnionTerritories during 2002-03 and 2003-04.

(c) and (d) In order to assess the damages caused to the coastal ecosystems including the mangroves due to the recent Tsunami, the Ministry has identified 9 premier scientific institutions to carry out a rapid assessment study based on the time series satellite imageries. The Reports from these agencies have been received which indicate destruction of coastal ecosystems including mangroves. A detailed action plan with regard to restoration of these ecosystems is required to be drawn up based on the findings of the rapid assessment studies.